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PROGRAMME AND RELATED QUESTIONS IN THE ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND RELATED FIELDS

Austria*, Russian Federation and United States of America: draft resolution

Modalities of reporting in the economic, social and related fields

The Economic and Social Council,

Having considered the report of the Secretary-General on modalities of reporting in the economic, social and related fields, 1/

Deploring the fact that, despite its decision 1990/272 of 27 July 1990 concerning that question, documentation is not submitted in time or within the recommended page limits,

Recognizing that members of the Economic and Social Council and its subsidiary bodies contribute directly to the large volume of documentation through their requests for reports and can ameliorate the situation through increased restraint in making such requests,

Adopts the following measures for the control and limitation of documentation:

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* In accordance with rule 72 of the rules of procedure of the Economic and Social Council.

1/ E/1994/88.

(a) Documents originating in the Secretariat for submission to the Economic and Social Council or its subsidiary bodies should not generally exceed sixteen single-space pages, except in exceptional cases such as non-recurrent comprehensive reports on issues not routinely addressed; the production of addenda to such documents should be strictly limited to that which is requested in the legislative mandate;

(b) In order to keep the reports of the functional commissions and other subsidiary bodies as closely as possible to a limit of thirty-two single-spaced pages, such reports should include only the following:

(i) Draft resolutions and draft decisions recommended for adoption by the Council;

(ii) Summaries and conclusions;

(iii) Details of voting, where appropriate;

(iv) Decisions relevant to the subsidiary body's own activities and procedures, which do not require action by the Council;

(v) Organization of work;

The practice of including a narrative of substantive discussions should be discontinued;

(c) The Secretariat is requested to ensure that the documentation is available in accordance with the six-week rule for the distribution of documents, in each of the official languages of the United Nations;

(d) The Secretariat is also requested, at the time of the adoption of a legislative mandate requesting documentation, to indicate whether the documentation could be prepared in accordance with the six-week rule and within existing staff and financial resources and, if not, to give an indication of the time and the costs involved through the preparation of a statement of programme budget implications;

(e) The members of the Council and its subsidiary bodies are encouraged to exercise restraint in making proposals containing requests for new reports and to consider the possibility of biennializing or triennializing resolutions requesting reports;

(f) The Secretariat is encouraged to implement the following specific reporting procedures:

(i) To present oral, rather than written, reports, where appropriate, particularly in regard to progress reports and reports that are prepared annually;

(ii) To submit single consolidated reports on related topics under a single item or sub-item of the agenda, the page limit for such reports that

cover more than a single legislative mandate to be twenty-four single-spaced pages;

(g) The Secretariat is further requested to compile for the Council and for each of its subsidiary bodies a list of documents mandated in resolutions to be adopted at a given session and to include in the report on the status of the documentation for a given session a list of reports already mandated for the coming session; in addition, the Secretariat should provide information on the meetings of intergovernmental bodies that are approved at the session and on the projected documentation requirements;

(h) The Secretariat is also requested to identify areas in which joint or common reporting to intergovernmental bodies can be undertaken.